

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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P R 181931Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5306

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 30102

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SP, FR

SUBJECT: QUAI D'ORSAY CONCERN OVER SIGNS OF POLARIZATION IN SPAIN

1. SUMMARY: QUAI MEDITERRANEAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR GELADE EXPRESSED MARKED CONCERN ABOUT EVOLVING POLITICAL POLARIZATION IN SPAIN. AS FOR FUNERAL/SUCCESSION CEREMONIES GOF MAY BE REPRESENTED BY PRESIDENT GISCARD AT JUAN CARLOS CORONATION IF THIS EVENT IS NOT CLOSELY LINKED TO FRANCO'S FUNERAL. END SUMMARY.

2. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFF NOVEMBER 18, GELADE SAID THAT QUAI HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN SOMEWHAT ENCOURAGED BY CALM RECEPTION JUAN CARLOS HAD RECEIVED AFTER RE-ASSUMING TEMPORARY POWERS. HOWEVER, FRANCO'S PAINFULLY EXTENDED DEMISE HAS SUBSTANTIALLY Affected SITUATION. ON THE ONE HAND IT HAS SHARPLY CIRCUMSCRIBED JUAN CARLOS' FREEDOM OF ACTION WITH RESPECT TO DEMOCRATIZATION IN CRUCIAL TRANSITION PERIOD. ON THE OTHER IT HAS GIVEN SPANISH RIGHT

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WING IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY TO RALLY AND ORGANIZE THEM-SELVES. MOREOVER QUAI IS CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT GELADE DESCRIBED AS "RATHER FAR-REACHING ARRESTS AND REPRESSIVE MEASURES" CURRENTLY UNDER WAY, ABOUT WHICH JUAN CARLOS CAN DO VERY LITTLE, BUT WHICH COMPROMISE HIM FURTHER IN VIEW OF DEMOCRATIC AND LEFT-WING SPANISH FORCES.

3. GELADE BELIEVES VARIOUS SPANISH PARTIES, INCLUDING POSSIBLY EVEN SPANISH COMMUNISTS, MAY BE PREPARED TO GIVE JUAN CARLOS A CHANCE. HOWEVER CURRENT INTENSE EFFORTS BY FRANQUISTS AND OTHERS OF RIGHT WING TO ORGANIZE THEM-SELVES TO PRESERVE MAXIMUM OF POWER ARE BOUND TO RESULT, SOONER RATHER THAN LATER, IN COMPARABLE LEFT-WING REACTIONS. IN QUAI VIEW SPANISH PEOPLE CONTINUE TO REMAIN DETERMINED TO AVOID RENEWED BLOODSHED. HOWEVER THE DEVELOPING POLARIZATION OF THE SPANISH POLITICAL SPECTRUM COULD, IN FRENCH ANALYSIS, ONLY COMPLICATE PROSPECTS FOR GRADUAL LIBERALIZATION OF SPANISH POLITICS EVERYONE DESIRES.

4. QUAI OF COURSE EXPECTS JUAN CARLOS TO PROVIDE FURTHER CLEAR SIGNALS AS TO HIS OWN, MORE LIBERAL POLITICAL INTENTIONS AS SOON AS FRANCO DIES. HOWEVER HE IS LIKELY TO REMAIN HANDICAPPED BY SPANISH RIGHT WING PRESSURES, AND WILL AT BEST NOT BE ABLE TO GO BEYOND CERTAIN VERY PRELIMINARY STEPS. DURING THIS SENSITIVE TRANSITION PERIOD GOF WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE WHAT SUPPORT IT CAN. GELADE REFERRED THIS CONNECTION TO GISCARD'S AND OTHER GOF OFFICIALS' INCREASINGLY FREQUENT REFERENCES TO (A) GRADUAL DEMOCRATIZATION IN SPAIN AND (B) TO ITS INCREASING ORIENTATION TOWARD EUROPE. HOWEVER NEITHER

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SUCH SUPPORT NOR GISCARD'S REPORTEDLY GOOD PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH JUAN CARLOS WILL BE OF MUCH HELP IF, AS A RESULT OF IRREVERSIBLE POLARIZATION SITUATION GETS INCREASINGLY OUT OF HAND.

5. GELADE HAD ALREADY RECEIVED REPORTS OF US TALKING POINTS ON SPAIN (STATE 268466) WITH WHICH HE AGREES IN GENERAL. HE STRESSED TWICE HOWEVER THAT HE HOPED U.S. WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO SPAIN'S PROCEEDING "TOO SLOWLY" TOWARD DEMOCRATIC REFORMS, EVEN THOUGH FRENCH FULLY AGREE WITH U.S. POINT THAT ONE SHOULD NOT PRESS THEM TOO HARD IN OTHER DIRECTION EITHER. THE EVOLUTION IN SPAIN OBVIOUSLY HAD TO PROCEED IN "PHASES." GELADE'S FEAR IS THAT PRESENT SITUATION MAY ALREADY HAVE SLIPPED CONSIDERABLY AND THAT ONLY CHANCE TO AVOID POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SPLIT IN SPANISH POLITICAL SPECTRUM THEREFORE LAY IN MOVING SUFFICIENTLY BRISKLY TOWARD DEMOCRATIZATION, SO AS TO ATTRACT BROAD SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT AND TO DEFUSE SITUATION.

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6. ON SUBJECT FRENCH REPRESENTATION AT SPANISH FUNERAL/ SUCCESSION CEREMONIES, GELADE SAID THAT DECISIONS STILL HAD NOT BEEN REACHED AT ELYSEE. IF JUAN CARLOS' CORONATION IS SUFFICIENTLY SEPARATED FROM FRANCO'S FUNERAL, QUAI NOW BELIEVES GISCARD HIMSELF MAY WELL ATTEND. HOWEVER, IF SPANIARDS DECIDE RELATE TWO EVENTS GOF WOULD SEND SOMEWHAT LOWER, PERHAPS DIFFERENTIATED REPRESENTATION, NOT BELOW MINISTERIAL RANK. DETAILED FRENCH DECISIONS WILL DEPEND ON TIMING AND OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES ACTUAL SCENARIO. GELADE REITERATED QUAI'S INTEREST TIMELY INFO U.S. PLANS THIS RESPECT.

7. COMMENT: MADRID'S 8052 RECEIVED JUST AFTER OUR CONVERSATION WITH GELADE. WE ARE STRUCK BY SIMILARITY OF DIAGNOSIS SITUATION.

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